GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:206
ANSWERED ON:19.11.2001
AGITATION BY FARMERS ORGANISATION
BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the farmers are agitating against the ply be multinational organisations to make them dependent on terminator seeds;

(b) if so, the steps the Government propose to protect the farmers` interest;

(c) whether Environment Ministry has ordered the destruction of crops cultivated by unapproved Bt. Gene seeds;

(d) whether the `pesticide lobby` is opposing the new seeds for its monetary interest; and

(e) the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV)

(a) & (b): There is no fear of terminator seeds entry into India through legal channels. The Government has issued instructions to permit issuing authorities to keep strict watch on any likely import of seeds having terminator gene. These authorities have been asked to be vigilant so that in no case any seed material having terminator gene is imported. In the Protection of Plant Varieties & Farmers` Right Bill, 2001, a provision has been made that novariety which involves terminator technology shall be registered under this Act.

(c): The Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) of Ministry of Environment & Forests has directed the Gujarat State Bio-technology Coordination Committee to under take following action regarding cultivation of unapproved Bt. Cotton seeds in Gujarat:

- procure the cotton bolls of Navbharat 151 crop from the farmers at the appropriate support price;
- separate the lint and seed;
- destroy the seed and store the lint in safe custody, and
- complete destruction of crop residue by uprooting and burning and sanitation of fields.

(d) & (e): This Department has not officially received any such information.